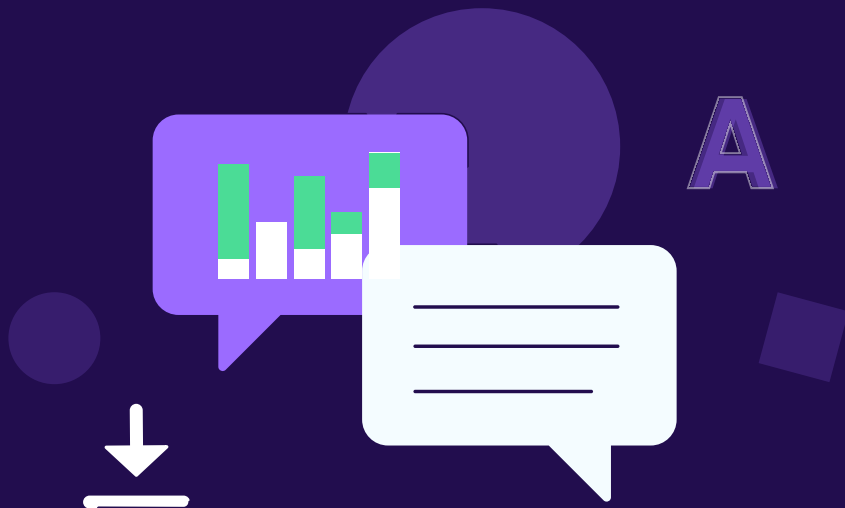


The ultimate A-Z mobile marketing dictionary

Your complete guide to the most used terms in the industry.



Thanks for downloading the AppsFlyer mobile marketing dictionary – your one-stop resource for understanding our industry jargon.



The mobile marketing world moves fast, so it's essential to make sure we're all speaking the same language – whether you're a new marketer or a seasoned pro. Here, you'll find clear definitions of all the terms you need to know. For a deeper dive, check out our [glossary pages](#) which explore the concepts in more detail.

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A

Active user

An active user is a unique user who engages with an app or a website during a predefined period of time. Your number of active users helps you measure growth, churn, and app stickiness: the more you have, the more popular your app is.

Ad exchange

An ad exchange is a digital marketplace where ad inventory (online advertising space) is bought and sold. The sellers are publishers (app or website owners), and the buyers are advertisers looking to place their ads on mobile or web.

Ad impression

An ad impression represents a pair of eyes on your ad. This metric is used to indicate the number of times an ad is displayed within an app – but note that it doesn't take into account how many times the ad was clicked.

Ad inventory

Ad inventory refers to the amount of advertising space a website or an app has.

Ad mediation

Ad mediation is the management of multiple ad networks through a single SDK to help publishers increase CPMs, fill rates, and efficiency.

Ad network

Ad networks connect advertisers to publishers or websites: they take the collection of ad supplies from publishers and match it to advertisers' demands, such as the number of impressions they want to achieve.

Ad podding

Ad podding is an advertising strategy that involves grouping multiple ads and playing them back-to-back during a single ad break. Ad podding is used by OTT platforms and content publishers to maximize fill rates and revenue.

Ad publisher

An ad publisher is a digital property owner that sells advertising space in its property (such as an app or a website) to a third party (an advertiser wanting to reach a specific audience with its message).

Ad server

An ad server is a software platform that manages the distribution of digital advertising campaigns. It holds creative assets on behalf of advertisers, and instantly matches these to the relevant audience using sophisticated algorithms.

Ad stacking

A form of advertising fraud, ad stacking is a technique where mobile apps or websites stack multiple ads beneath one another in a single ad placement. This results in false impressions: only the top ad is actually served, but the advertisers sitting below it are still billed.

Ad tag

A piece of HTML or JavaScript code added to the source code of a publisher's website or app, an ad tag triggers an ad request, helping to deliver relevant ads to the right audience at the right time. They're also known as creative tags or placement tags.

Ad unit

This is a placeholder that shows ads to users on an app or website, generating revenue for the publisher. Ad units contain code that calls ads from ad servers, so that ads can be shown in different formats within a platform.

App store optimization (ASO)

ASO is similar to SEO for websites, but it relates to app stores. It refers to the ongoing process of increasing an app's visibility in app stores to drive organic downloads, installs, and ultimately revenue.

App-ads.txt

This is a text file that app developers or publishers add to their developer website, listing the vendors authorized to sell their inventory (ad space). App-ads.txt is designed to increase transparency and security for all parties in the programmatic advertising ecosystem.

App Tracking Transparency (ATT)

ATT, as it's commonly known, is Apple's opt-in privacy framework that requires all iOS apps to ask users for permission to share their data. This is done in the form of a popup where users can either consent to or deny tracking. Introduced after the launch of iOS 14, ATT has had a significant impact on mobile advertising because it limits the user data that app developers can share with other companies, creating challenges for ad personalization and measurement.

Ads.txt

Ads.txt is a text file publishers can add to their websites to list supply-side platforms (SSPs) and ad exchanges authorized to sell their ad inventory. It's designed to increase transparency in programmatic advertising and prevent ad fraud.

App stickiness

If your app is sticky, it means users engage with it on a regular basis. The higher the user engagement, the stickier the app.

Attribution modeling

Attribution modeling is a framework for analyzing which touchpoints receive credit (and how much) along the journey to conversion - in other words, which channels or media sources drive users to make a purchase or complete an action.

Attribution window

An attribution window describes the period of time in which a media partner can claim that an impression, click, or other engagement they generated resulted in an app install. This helps you separate non-organic installs from organic ones (those that would have happened anyway).

Average revenue per daily active user (ARPDau)

ARPDau is a key performance indicator (KPI) that shows how much revenue, on average, an active user generates per day. Tracking this can help you see the impact of changes to your app in near-real time: for example, how users are responding to the launch of a particular ad campaign.

Average revenue per user (ARPU)

ARPU is a measurement that helps all types of companies understand how much money, on average, they are generating from a single customer over a set period of time.

Average revenue per paying user (ARPPU)

ARPPU is a similar metric to ARPU, but focuses on paying users, leaving aside those who use your app for free. You can use it to show how much revenue these paying users generate, on average, over a certain time period.

AVOD (Advertising-based video on demand)

This monetization strategy gives users free access to on-demand video content on the platform in exchange for watching ads - the approach you see on YouTube, for instance. The primary source of revenue in AVOD is ad revenue, which is used to offset production and hosting costs.

B

Bid request

A bid request is a piece of code. used to sell display ads and inventory details. It allows visitors to see ads most relevant to them, and means multiple advertisers can use the same ad spot on a given publisher's platform.

BVOD (Broadcaster video on demand)

BVOD refers to on-demand video content from traditional broadcasters, such as the BBC iPlayer service. It includes high-quality, professionally produced content available online and on demand.



Click farm

This is a physical location set up with mobile devices to generate clicks, in bulk, for fraudulent purposes.

Click to install time (CTIT)

CTIT describes the interval of time between a user clicking on your ad and opening your app. It's helpful in detecting and preventing mobile ad fraud, where bad actors try to fake last clicks.

Click-through rate (CTR)

CTR measures how often a link, ad, or email is clicked in relation to how many times it's shown. It shows you how effective your ads are at engaging users.

Conversion rate (CVR)

CVR shows the percentage of times a user took a desired action after engaging with a piece of content - for example, clicking on an ad to install an app. It enables you to measure the effectiveness of specific campaign activities.

Cost per action (CPA)

In the CPA pricing model, marketers pay ad networks or media sources when a user takes a particular action (such as completing a purchase or registration) inside of an app, after engagement with an ad. It's calculated by dividing the advertising cost by the number of actions taken.

Cost per completed view (CPCV)

With the CPCV advertising model, the advertiser only pays when a viewer watches their video ad in full (or up to a defined point). It's calculated by dividing advertising cost by completed video views.

Cost per click (CPC)

In the CPC pricing model, the advertiser pays every time their online ad receives a click. It's calculated by dividing the advertising cost by the number of clicks, and is useful for measuring ad effectiveness.

Cost per engagement (CPE)

In the CPE pricing model, the advertiser pays whenever a user takes a specific desired action within the app. It's calculated by dividing the advertising cost by the number of actions taken.

Cost per install (CPI)

CPI is a pricing model used in mobile app user acquisition campaigns, calculated by dividing campaign costs by the number of installs achieved. It shows you how much you're spending to achieve each install.

Cost per view (CPV)

In the CPV pricing model, the advertiser only pays when a user watches their video ad. It's calculated by dividing the advertising cost by the number of views.

Cost per mille (CPM)

“Mille” is Latin for a thousand, and CPM shows the cost of 1,000 ad impressions (getting your online ad in front of 1,000 people). It’s used in programmatic advertising, where advertisers bid automatically for large numbers of impressions.

Cross-device

In a cross-device scenario, users move through the conversion funnel via two or more devices. For example, they could be on a desktop website when they see an ad for your app, and then pick up their phone to install it.

CTV (Connected TV)

CTV devices can access content via the internet, including on streaming services, social media platforms, and internet browsers. Don’t confuse this with OTT, which refers to the content streamed on a physical CTV device.

D

Daily active users (DAU)

This is the number of unique users that engage with your app within a 24-hour window. DAU is typically used by businesses where users are expected to interact with the app on a daily basis (such as gaming), while those expecting less frequent usage would measure WAU (weekly) or MAU (monthly).

Deep linking

Deep linking is the practice of sending users directly to a specific location inside an app, rather than a generic app homepage or mobile website. Deep links are similar to regular web links, in that you click on them to go to a specific location - the difference is that in the context of mobile, these links take you to content inside an app.

Deferred deep linking

Deferred deep linking is a form of deep linking, users who click on a promotion (paid or owned) are taken to a specific page inside an app they haven't yet installed.

Demand-side platform (DSP)

This is a software platform that allows advertisers to manage data exchange accounts and multiple ad exchange accounts through one interface. DSPs are an effective marketing automation tool because they enable advertisers to efficiently buy high-quality impressions at scale.

Device ID

A device ID is a unique, anonymized identifier is made up of a combination of numbers and letters and is associated with a single mobile device: a smartphone, tablet, or a wearable such as a smart watch. It allows marketers and developers to measure user behavior without seeing personal information - but, under ATT, they now need the user's consent to do this.

Device farm

Similar to a click farm, a device farm is a location where fraudsters manually perform actions (such as clicks, installs, and other forms of engagement) to create the illusion of legitimate activity, draining advertising budgets.

Dormant users

This refers to users who haven't used your app in a while. The timeframe you consider as dormant will depend on your industry. Once you identify dormant users, you can attempt to win them back through re-engagement campaigns.

E

eCPM (Effective cost per mille)

This is the revenue earned by a publisher (app developer) for every one thousand ad impressions displayed on their app ("mille" being Latin for a thousand). It differs from CPM, which is used by advertisers to plan and optimize campaigns: instead, eCPM is used by publishers to optimize ad placements, monitor monetization campaigns, and measure overall ad monetization performance.

F

FAST TV (Free Ad-Supported Streaming TV)

With this service, users can access pre-programmed video channels for free in exchange for watching ads during pre-scheduled breaks. In that respect, FAST TV works like traditional TV but over the internet - examples include Peacock, Pluto TV, and Roku.



GAID (Google Advertising ID)

Known variously as Google Advertising ID, GAID, Android ID, and Android Advertising ID (AAID), this is a device unique identifier that enables app developers and marketers to measure campaign performance and user behavior across media sources, without compromising user privacy. GAID has given publishers valuable app and attribution data, but is now being phased out and replaced by Google's Privacy Sandbox, which better protects user privacy online.

H

Header bidding

Also known as advanced bidding or pre-bidding, header bidding is a programmatic approach to selling advertising space at scale, in real time. Publishers auction ad inventory to multiple ad exchanges that bid for the highest price, maximizing publisher revenue and giving advertisers access to premium space.

Hybrid app

A hybrid app is one that can be downloaded and installed on multiple mobile platforms like Android and iOS – think Gmail or Instagram, for example. It's built in a way that allows developers to use the same code for all operating systems, saving time and money when you want to reach a large audience.

Identifier for advertisers (IDFA)

An IDFA is a unique, random identifier (device ID) that Apple assigns to every iOS device. It's the mobile equivalent of a web cookie, in the sense that it enables advertisers to monitor users' engagement with their ads, and keep track of their post-install activity. Under Apple's ATT framework, users now need to opt in to share their IDFA with developers and advertisers, limiting the amount of data available.

Identifier for vendors (IDFV)

An IDFV is an alphanumeric identifier assigned to app users that can be shared across all the apps owned by one developer (company). With user-level data limited by ATT privacy restrictions, IDFV enables developers to run iOS campaigns across multiple apps in their ecosystem.

In-app bidding

In programmatic advertising, in-app bidding is a sales method that allows mobile publishers to offer their ad inventory in a real-time auction. This enables all advertisers to participate simultaneously in a fair competition for ad space.

In-app events

These are actions users take within an app after installation, such as making a purchase, registering their details, or completing a level.

In-app notifications

In-app notifications are messages sent to users directly within an app - for example, highlighting particular features or offers, providing onboarding support, or offering in-app purchases like enhanced gameplay. Styled to fit the platform's user interface, they appear in the form of fullscreen pop-ups or small overlays.

In-app purchase (IAP)

IAP is an app monetization method where users can buy things within the app for real money, including extra content, goods, or subscription services.

In-game purchase

An in-game purchase is a fee paid by a user within a mobile gaming app beyond the initial download or purchase. It typically entitles them to additional in-game currency, powers, or features, while providing an additional revenue stream for the publisher.

Install referrer

An install referrer is a unique, anonymous string of characters specific to Android devices that is used for measuring install ad performance. Specifically, it enables advertisers to attribute ad activity via the relevant Android app store (like Google Play).

Instant apps

Android instant apps allow users to access an app's content without having to install the app. This saves the user space on their device, because the instant app will deep-link to an app's precise function only.

K

K-factor

Your K-factor defines your app's virality by factoring in how many new users the average existing user introduces to your app, either through referral campaigns or organically via word of mouth.



Last-click attribution

The last-click attribution model tracks which touchpoint – such as an ad, video, or social media post – the user last clicked on before converting. This is then credited as the influencing factor in the journey to install, purchase, or another desired action.

Lifetime value (LTV)

Your LTV is an estimate of the average revenue a customer will generate over the time that they use your app. A high LTV indicates valuable customers, while a low one could impact your profitability.

Limit ad tracking (LAT)

LAT is a feature on iOS devices that allows users to opt out of personalized advertising, by replacing their IDFA with a string of zeroes. Prior to the introduction of Apple's ATT framework, it was the main way for users to protect their privacy.

Lookback window

After an ad is clicked or viewed, the lookback window is the period of time within which an install can be attributed to that ad. For example, if the lookback window is seven days, the user must install the app within seven days of exposure to an ad for that ad to be credited with influencing their decision.

M

Media mix modeling (MMM)

MMM is a modeling approach that measures the impact of marketing and advertising campaigns to determine how internal and external elements contribute to a desired outcome, be it revenue or any other KPI.

Mobile ad fraud

Mobile ad fraud describes a variety of techniques criminals use to exploit systems that deliver or measure the ROI on ads. By hijacking monetization strategies like CPI and CPA, where advertisers pay when a specific action is registered, fraudsters can steal advertising budgets through fake activity.

Mobile attribution

Mobile attribution is a way of tying app installs to marketing efforts, by measuring which campaigns, media partners, and channels delivered specific installs.

Mobile measurement partner (MMP)

An MMP is a company (like AppsFlyer) that helps apps measure campaign performance across marketing channels, media sources, and ad networks.

Mobile interstitials

A form of in-app advertising, mobile interstitials are full-screen ad placements that appear between standard interactions during the user experience. These types of ads materialize between blocks of content, and at natural transition points like when moving from one game level to another or in between articles on a news site.

Monthly active users (MAU)

This is the number of unique users that engage with your app within a 30-day window. Whereas DAU and WAU are useful for apps that expect daily or weekly usage, MAU is typically used by apps where users are expected to interact a few times a month or less (such as banking apps).

MVPD (Multichannel video programming distributor)

An MVPD provides bundled TV channels for consumers to purchase through cable, fiber, or satellite. Typically operating a subscription model, examples include providers like DISH, Xfinity, and Time Warner Cable.



Offerwall

An offerwall is a form of in-app advertising that helps developers reward user engagement and create a revenue stream from paid and free users alike. The developer gets paid whenever a user engages with an offer of their own choosing, for example, taking the opportunity to acquire more in-game currency.

Organic install

An organic install refers to an app download that occurs without any direct effort by a marketer to acquire users via paid or owned media campaigns. It includes installs achieved through search or word of mouth.

OTT (Over-the-top)

This is the practice of delivering digital content online in place of (or "over the top" of) traditional broadcast TV or cable boxes. Content can be streamed through a range of devices, including TVs, desktops, mobile devices, and games consoles.

Owned media

The term "owned media" refers to the channels you control yourself – such as your website, app, social media profiles, or newsletters – in contrast to paid media, where you pay a third party to display your content.

P

Postback

A postback is the exchange of information between servers to report a user's action on an app, a website, or a network. By informing media sources when installs or in-app events happen, postbacks help with campaign measurement and optimization.

Predicted lifetime value (pLTV)

pLTV is the predicted (or potential) value of a customer is calculated by combining past learnings with current measurements. It enables marketers to build and optimize campaigns around their audience's predicted consumer trends, without compromising user privacy.

Preferred deals

A form of programmatic advertising (it's also known as programmatic non-guaranteed), a preferred deal is an arrangement where a publisher (seller) agrees to provide an advertiser (buyer) with preferential access to its inventory. The advertiser, in turn, gets early-bird inventory access in exchange for a fixed, pre-negotiated CPM.

Private marketplace (PMP)

In the online advertising ecosystem, a private marketplace is an auction in which the publisher selects a limited audience of advertisers to bid on its inventory. Private marketplaces offer more control in ad placement and typically offer prime placement, as well as reducing fraud compared to open auctions.

Probabilistic modeling

Probabilistic modeling is a statistical technique used to predict outcomes based on the impact of random events or actions. It's a way of measuring campaign performance based on probability, so that user privacy isn't compromised.

Programmatic guaranteed

A form of programmatic advertising, this is a direct deal that involves one-on-one contact between a publisher (seller) and an advertiser (buyer). The publisher agrees to offer a fixed number of ad impressions, while the advertiser commits to a pre-negotiated price to procure them.

Programmatic TV

This is a way of buying ad spots using automated technology. Whereas traditional TV advertisers placed ads based on the size of a show's audience, programmatic TV enables in-depth segmentation, so that ads appear where the relevant audience are – regardless of device or platform.

PVOD (Premium video on demand)

PVOD is a revenue model where OTT providers charge viewers a premium price for exclusive early access to video content. It's similar to traditional video-on-demand (VOD) – the difference is that it offers earlier access for a higher price.

R

Re-engagement

This marketing strategy aims to encourage inactive users, customers, and subscribers to resume activity within an app or a website. Re-engagement tactics include serving push notifications, ads, and emails to people who have reached a pre-set level of inactivity (like not logging in for 14 days, or leaving products abandoned in their shopping cart), with the aim of boosting value and preventing churn.

Real-time bidding (RTB)

In programmatic advertising, RTB is the process of employing demand-side platforms (DSPs) to bid automatically for ad impressions. The bidding happens in real time, with the highest bidder selected and the ad served in just a fraction of a second.

Reattribution window

A reattribution window refers to a set period of time during which a user re-installs an app thanks to a re-engagement campaign. If they re-install after this window, the campaign can no longer be credited with influencing their decision.

Retention rate

Your retention rate measures the percentage of customers or users your app retains over a given period. This shows how much users value your service and helps you measure ongoing revenue.

Return on ad spend (ROAS)

You can use ROAS to help you understand which campaigns and ads are working (and which aren't) by measuring how much revenue was earned in comparison to how much budget was spent. The higher your ROAS, the more effective your campaign.

S

Self-serve DSP

This is one way advertisers manage their data exchange accounts and multiple ad exchange accounts through a single interface. A self-serve DSP offers a cheaper and easier way to get involved with programmatic advertising: it gives advertisers complete control over the ad buying process, from selecting inventory to segmentation and campaign management.

SKAdNetwork (SKAN)

StoreKit Ad Network, or SKAdNetwork (SKAN for short), is Apple's privacy-centric mobile attribution measurement system. It helps ad networks and advertisers measure their ad activity (such as impressions, clicks, and app installs) on an aggregated level, without accessing user or device-level data.

Session

A session is a single instance of active engagement by a user in an app or on a website. Knowing how long users typically spend in your app, and how they interact with it, can help you improve the user experience.

Supply-side platform (SSP)

This is a technology platform or software that manages a publisher's ad inventory across multiple ad exchanges. SSPs are effective marketing tools because they automate and optimize the sales of a publisher's media space, helping to fill it with ads and generate revenue.

SVOD (Subscription video on demand)

A popular OTT video monetization model, SVOD gives subscribers unlimited, ad-free access to on-demand video content through platforms like Netflix, Disney+, and Amazon Prime in exchange for a recurring fee.

T

TVOD (Transactional video on demand)

TVOD is an OTT video monetization strategy that charges usage-based fees. Instead of recurring subscription payments, the viewer pays a one-time fee to view, rent, or purchase content. It's a popular model for movie rentals, as well as one-off sports events and online learning content.

V

View-through rate (VTR)

VTR measures the percentage of individuals who watched a video ad to the end, allowing marketers to track their ad's effectiveness. It typically applies to unskippable ads, and is calculated by dividing the total completed views by the total number of measured impressions (then multiply this by 100 to get a percentage).

View-through attribution (VTA)

This is a way of attributing conversions (app installs, re-attribution, re-engagement) to ad impressions, even if the user doesn't click on the ad right away. Also known as impression tracking, VTA helps measure and optimize the performance of your ad campaigns.

vMVPD (Virtual multichannel video programming distributor)

This is an OTT service that helps users watch their favorite TV channels through the internet, without cable connections. vMVPD services are available on smart TVs, smartphones, tablets, and desktops.

W

Walled garden

A subcategory of a data clean room, a walled garden is a closed platform or ecosystem where the technology provider has significant control over the hardware, applications, or content being shared among the participating parties. It enables marketers to access aggregate insights, rather than user-level data, to inform and optimize campaigns.

Weekly active users (WAU)

This is the number of unique users that engage with your app within a seven-day window. In contrast to MAU (monthly) and DAU (daily) measurements, WAU is generally used by businesses where users are expected to interact with the app on a weekly basis (such as analytics tools).

Web attribution

Web attribution is the process of identifying and crediting the touchpoints along a given user journey on the web that lead to a conversion. It can be used alongside mobile attribution to gain a holistic picture of the user journey across multiple platforms.

White-label DSP

In programmatic advertising, this is a demand-side platform (DSP) that advertisers and marketers purchase and customize for ad placements. White-label DSPs can be integrated with as many ad exchanges and supply-side platforms (SSP) as necessary, which gives advertisers access to comprehensive and diverse audience segment

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